Irrigation Soon to Reclaim 1,200,000 Desert Acres

BECAUSE of the dam and the subsequent reclamation through the Columbia Basin, a new and untold wealth is expected to flow into the commercial channels of the country. What new industries will be developed and what advances science will make toward this end, as well as for agriculture, only the years will tell. But, needless to say, much is promised in the way of national development and expansion through the advent of the Grand Coulee project, as viewed through the eyes of government officials and those men of vision who saw in the program a new vista of wealth unfold for future generations.

Not only will the Grand Coulee Dam bring new life to the parched wastes of the northwest with the irrigation of 1,200,000 acres of arid land, but it will provide a heretofore untouched source of power. Behind the huge dam will be a wealth of potential energy which will turn the 18 turbines set in the two ends of the structure. A total of 1,944,000 kilowatts of electrical energy will make up the combined capacity of the Coulee Dam plant at the time of its completion. The vision of engineers and advocates of low-cost power see in the project the answer to the ever-growing demand for this present, man-made necessity. Just as the water poured on the fertile but dry soil of the Columbia Basin will open new avenues for future wealth, so, the development of electric energy, by means of the gigantic force of the river, will bring to the northwest, industry interested in abundant power, and likewise, give the isolated farm family and community a present-day domestic necessity.

Generators Are Ordered

Orders already have been placed for three of the generators to be installed in the power house at the west end of the dam, and construction of the units is going forward. To visualize the size of these modern generators, one must imagine a freight train of 45 to 50 cars as necessary to carry the parts of a single generating set from the eastern factory to the dam site. The weight of each generator will be in excess of 2,000,000 pounds. Each of the turbines which are to drive the generators will add 1,500,000 pounds to the individual aggregate of a single unit.

Nine generators, each, will be housed in the power plants located at either end of the dam. The output of each generator will be 108,000 kilowatts and the ultimate installed generator capacity, including three 12,500-kilowatt station-service units, will be 1,981,500 kilowatts. For a comparison, it is interesting to note that the generators will be 30 per cent greater in capacity than the largest built to date—those now at Boulder Dam, each of which are rated at 82,500 kilowatts capacity.